

# THE PATROL SYSTEM SURVEY

The patrol system is the essential element of Scouting. It is the central focus of successfully delivering all that the Scouting program promises.

Applying the patrol system (or method) has always been a challenge as it is often misunderstood.

Like many Scoutmasters I have struggled with understanding and implementing the patrol system effectively. Over the past twenty six years I have attempted several different approaches to building and sustaining a strong patrol system. In that time I have learned that the basic framework of Scouting needs no modification; the basic principles are sound.

## **ABOUT THE SURVEY**

Most of what happens in Scouting is not easily quantifiable and there is too broad a range of practices to imagine that there is any way to ask all the 'right' questions. I am also aware that anything I author is going to be subject to my own experiences, interpretations and biases. I designed this survey rather hastily in order to see if I could gather some information for a training course I am preparing. It is by no means exhaustive or scientific (or particularly well designed).

## **RESPONDENTS**

90 people responded to the request from all over the U.S., three respondents were outside the U.S.; Singapore, Germany and the U.K.. 97% identified themselves as Scoutmasters, Assistant Scoutmasters or troop committee members.

## **MY OBSERVATIONS**

I'll reiterate that these are *my* observations. Your observations may differ. I begin by concentrating on what doesn't work. Certainly many of the respondents have strong patrol systems and strong traditions of youth leadership. It isn't difficult to find lots of great resources that explain the patrol system and outline how to work with it successfully.

I think it is equally valuable to examine what isn't working. It is plain that none of us are alone in dealing with frustrations and challenges, there's nothing new under the sun; is there? We also want to understand why things are the way they are as a first step to recognizing how to make things better.

The patrol system is much more than separating Scouts into groups and managing them as patrols. A through discussion of the subject is linked with issues of youth leadership, the role of adults and nearly every other aspect of the Scouting program

The survey results track four major issues that are challenges to the patrol system;

### **Adults may be overly-involved;**

86% of respondents report at least some direct involvement of adults in the planning process of this 24% report that planning is largely or wholly accomplished by the adults.

Skill instruction happens with direct adult involvement in 73% of the responding Troops. Of these 8% report that adults do all of the instructing.

79% respond that adults are often involved in presenting the program at meetings and campouts.

36% report that directions to Scouts are largely given by adults, of this 9% report that directions came almost exclusively from adults.

### **Youth leader's planning is sometimes compromised.**

24% report that youth leader's plans are either nonexistent or frequently revised or vetoed by adults.

60% report that adults other than the Scoutmaster attend patrol leader's council meetings and 53% speak up and advise Scouts during these meetings on a regular basis

26% of troops report that adults have the primary responsibility for planning meetings and events.

### **Patrols may be too small or too large**

53% of patrols have more than eight or fewer than six members.

## Patrols don't appear to have a large measure of independence or continuity

45% of patrols are often combined for a given activity or event.

49% of patrols have 10 minutes or less scheduled at troop meetings, 17% have no time scheduled.

41% of troops have inter-patrol competitions less than once a month.

87% of troops do not have their patrols set up independent campsites; of these 29% make no differentiation of patrols at all when camping

60% of patrols have no independent meetings or activities.

Based on survey results and comments many respondents' troops are in transition towards a stronger patrol system. Many of the comments reflect that this is a challenging process;

*I try to control the adults talking, even my own. It is difficult to control adults - particularly the ones that don't think they need training. I generally try to not speak unless the boys are way off target, and then I only speak to get them back, or when I am on the agenda to comment.*

*I need to find a way to exclude adults (other than SM) from these PLC meetings.*

*Our last few PLC meeting have been concurrent with troop committee meetings, which is not a good thing to do if you have a group of passive scouts, like we have.*

*This is strongly recommended by the Scoutmaster, much to the frustration and anger of ASMs-- who also serve on the committee*

*If other adults need to be present, I will ask them to keep quiet and will not hesitate to ask them to leave if necessary.*

*... Certain parent personalities have entered and make the process .hell*

*We are trying to shift to 100% boy skills lead... parent group makes it rather difficult*

*This is a constant battle. The Scouts' chosen activities are often changed by the outdoor activities chair(s) and committee chair, without knowledge or permission of the Scouts. By the time the activity is announced, the Scouts are resigned to it.*

*This drives some of the parents crazy. We are in the process of retraining those parents.*

*Our parents and ASMs have not attended Leader Specific Training and do not really understand the patrol system*

*We have had leaders who have left the unit after 6 months of the patrol method. Typically, these are Webelos leaders or parents who can't make the transition ...*

*Took over parent run troop, have moved to Scout run. Have three legacy parents that don't get it.*

*We are struggling to implement this. When the parents ran the troop, there were no patrol meetings so the Scouts have no institutional knowledge of the process.*

*This balance is being slowly shifted toward the Scouts, but only with much resistance from the adults.*

*Some adults play lip service to the patrol system, but don't want to waste time for a patrol meeting inside the troop meeting.*

*I have been suffering some resistance to this, especially at first, but now the adults seem to approve of the way the troop is heading. Still grumbling from some boys and adults not knowing the meeting format or what is expected of them. I try to say it is like an ocean liner changing direction, it's going to take some time.*

While the majority of the challenges seem to come from adults there were also some general complaints about the Scouts:

*The previous SPL never got his act together to have PLC meetings*

*Very hard to get Scouts to imagine making it happen*

*Scouts are over scheduled with sports, music, and other after school activities.*

*We have 18 live scouts or 22 if you count the paper kids - the ones that pay annual dues to recharter but don't do anything at all.*

*New scouts have not learned about the chain of command within their youth membership*

## **SOLUTIONS**

### **Understand how the Patrol System Functions**

Authentic patrols are wholly dependent on 'real, free handed' responsibility of youth leaders.

### **Coming to terms with uncertainty**

It is important to see things from the scale and perspective of Scout aged boys. Their conception of successfully planning, developing and leading activities is not based on an adult perspective of successful planning, development and leadership.

Just as it would be unfair to hold a first grade student to the same standard of a college professor we cannot hold Scouts to an adult standard of leadership. Rather we want to encourage every success and minimize any perceived failures.

If we accept that learning to lead is a process we must also accept that there will inevitably be uncertainties in planning and other aspects of leadership. In fact we welcome these uncertainties and seize on them as teachable moments.

### **Develop appropriate levels of instruction and oversight.**

In our zealotry to see Scouts succeed adults sometimes over-instruct and over-supervise their efforts.

Scouts can internalize and understand instruction in leadership best when it is;

- Offered in small doses

- Is immediately related to the task at hand

Adults may feel that they must have direct supervision of Scouts at all times. They feel that it is important to continuously instruct and offer advice in order to assure that Scouts are successful.

Scouts will not develop independent initiative or robust leadership skills if they feel that they are constantly under evaluation and supervision. Adults must allow Scouts to pursue Scouting with their patrol free from constant interference.

Adults are rightly concerned with the safety of Scouts and the propriety of their speech, actions and decisions. Scout aged-boys are sometimes poor judges of risk and danger and need occasional reminders as to the appropriateness of their speech, actions and decisions. For these reasons Scouting gives adults the provisional authority to respond to emergencies, stop unsafe or inappropriate behavior, and to make basic judgments about the appropriateness of activities.

In practice the vast majority of Scouts will respond to trust placed in them by being trustworthy. When we expect positive things from our Scouts we normally get positive results.

### **Understand how proximity affects leadership**

As a function of their schooling and other influences Scouts will typically defer to adults when they are close by. Adults are, in the eyes of Scouts, the presumptive leader and authority figure. Adults must be conscious of the affect their physical proximity has on a youth leader's ability to do his job.

### **Understand the place of responsibility and authority in Scouting**

Adults are present in Scouting to serve as advisors and mentors to Scouts and to assist them with administrative tasks. Appreciating the limitations of this role are important.

The real authority and responsibility in Scouting is in the hands of the youth leaders. It is not something that is doled out to them by adults – the nature of the program invests Scouts with it as a matter of course.

All too commonly adults misapprehend that their authority extends to those tasks that are clearly entrusted to the Scouts.

### **Resetting the focus of our efforts**

Scouting is driven by the Patrol system. The Patrol System is the cause of the effect not an effect of other causes. Patrols develop leadership and character. Patrols engender advancement opportunities.

Adults often seize on the more tangible, easily quantifiable, aspects of the program with the expectation that they express the central goal of Scouting. These methods are not all equally weighted and they require a balanced approach.

The mission of Scouting as is “to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.” And to “prepare youth to become a responsible, participating citizens and leaders”

Skill development within the advancement program, perfection of uniform, and expertise in the outdoors are only a means to an end, they are not designed to be an end in themselves..

Despite the single most important component of Scouting is the Patrol system most of our efforts are based on the function and success of the Troop rather than Patrols. It is useful to remember that in the grand scheme of things the Troop is relatively unimportant except in its role to support the Patrols that make it up.

### **MY ANALYSIS**

Individual survey questions are addressed in the analysis that follows.

‘The Real’ simply reports on the results.

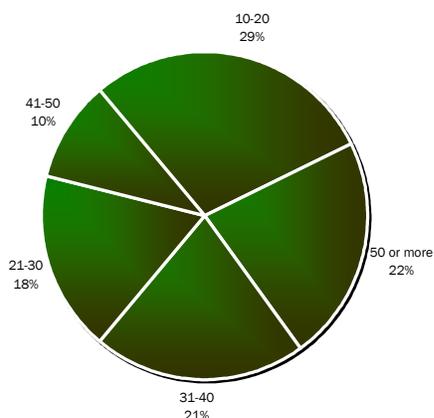
‘The Ideal’ is my attempt to reference best practices from BSA literature and other writings (notably those of Baden-Powell, Bill Hillcourt and Earnest Thompson Seton.

‘My Opinion’ is just that. Yours may differ!

‘My Answer’ how I answered the survey

‘Respondents Comments’ are the comments accompanying specific questions. I have taken the liberty of condensing some repetitive comments into representative statements and editing out a very few that were off-topic.

## 1. What is the Size of Your Troop?



### THE REAL

As of 2008 the average size of Scout troop according to BSA figures was 20 Scouts (844,000 Scouts in 41,000 Troops). 55% of respondents were from troops of fewer than 30 Scouts, 24% were from troops of 50 or more. 33% of the troops have than 20 Scouts less.

### THE IDEAL

There is no actual ideal number for troop membership. Baden Powell suggested 32 as a maximum number. Jamboree Troops are made up of four

patrols of eight Scouts and four youth leaders for a total of 36, just a few more than B.P. suggested.

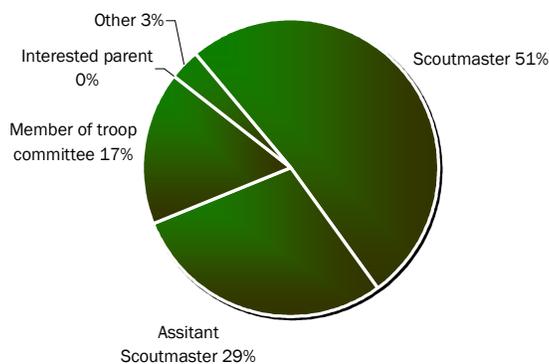
### THE OPINION

30-40 Scouts is comprehensible. Not so large that individual Scouts are lost in the mix. Around 20 means two patrols of eight and four youth leaders; critical mass for the patrol system to work well. Much below 20 and a Troop really becomes two patrols.

### MY ANSWER

41-50

## 2. What is your leadership role in Scouting?



'Other' respondents include *patrol leader, assistant district commissioner, and senior patrol leader*

### MY ANSWER

Scoutmaster

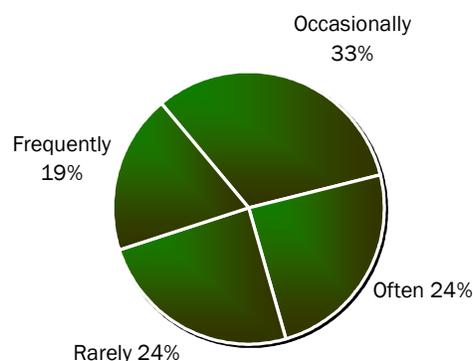
### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*Troop webmaster. Eagle Scout*

*Formerly Scoutmaster, now ASM for Venture Patrol.*

*I am the new Scoutmaster for a small but growing troop. Was ASM for 4 years. 9 boys in troop and will have 9-10*

### 3. We combine patrols or make them up from participating Scouts for a given event/trip



#### THE REAL

45% of respondents reported combining patrols often or frequently. (What's the difference between 'frequently' and 'often'? Not much, I didn't write this question very well.)

Comments on this question almost all indicated that patrols were combined if the attendance at an event was low. The faulty formation of the question did not allow for a 'never' response but I think it is safe to say that combining patrols from time to time is a common practice.

#### THE IDEAL

Obviously we'd like all of our Scouts to attend every event and outing but it just isn't a realistic expectation. It seems to be generally accepted that four or more Scouts can function as a patrol if some of their patrol is absent.

#### THE OPINION

I don't like combining patrols. I have also learned that it is better to concentrate on the Scouts who show up than wring my hands over the ones who don't.

#### MY ANSWER

Often

#### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*When less than 6 scouts in a patrol are going on a campout.*

*Because we rarely have "quorums" of real patrols at campouts.*

*Only combine, typically on campouts where a patrol has a low turnout.*

*We are rapidly heading to Rarely*

*If a Patrol has 3 or less boys going on an outing we merge these boys in with another Patrol.*

*This is a result of the older boys involvement with High School activities.*

*We have to do this out of necessity; our troop is just too small to do otherwise.*

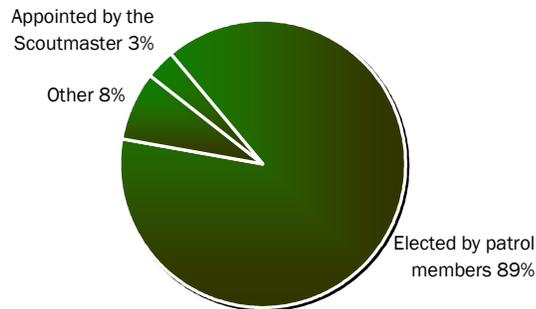
*Lucky to get 4 or 5 scouts on an outing. Almost always combine them into one temporary patrol.*

*We adjust to the size of the participating group, but rely upon the Scouts to encourage their entire patrol to participate*

*This used to be the rule, but since taking over as SM 1.5 years ago, we do this very rarely.*

*Campouts are difficult because we only get about half the troop as participants.*

## 4. How are patrol leaders elected in your troop?



### THE REAL

The vast majority of respondents report that patrol leaders are elected by patrol members.

Four who answered 'other' to this question described the following methods:

- *Appointed by SPL and ASPL*
- *Elected by all Troop members;*
- *Mixture of appointment by the Scoutmaster and elected by patrol members*
- *Appointed by SPL.*

### THE IDEAL

While the Scoutmaster or troop may set basic rank or age requirements for eligibility Scouting literature specifies that patrol leaders be elected by the members of the patrol.

### THE OPINION

In my experience Scouts generally choose solid leaders. I don't see much merit in the usual arguments for altering the simple method of having patrol members choose their patrol leader. To those who say that these positions should be reserved for older Scouts needing a leadership position for advancement I say that these older Scouts need to make good and earn the respect of their peers. Reserving spots for them is, to my lights, unfair. I don't think that applying rank or age requirements is necessary – this is one decision that Scouts should make for themselves free of any form of coercion or control.

Can an inexperienced eleven or twelve-year-old Scout can be a successful patrol leader? Yes, he can.

I can understand some extraordinary circumstances where a Scoutmaster, SPL or anyone else appointing a patrol leader – but I wouldn't think it is acceptable as a regular practice.

### MY ANSWER

Elected by patrol members.

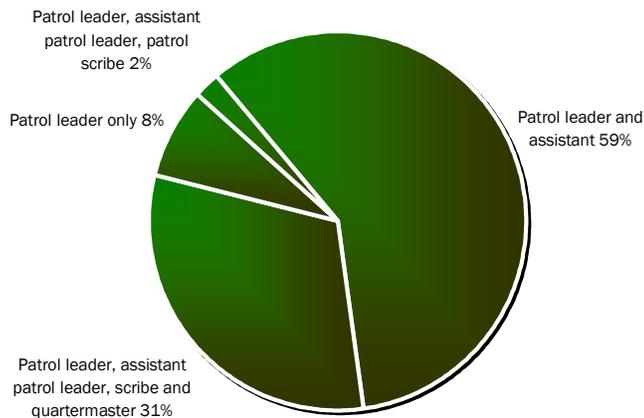
### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*Elections twice a year.*

*Patrol members hold patrol leader elections after new patrols are formed, and are free to hold elections again anytime thereafter*

*Under advisement of outgoing SPL and to a less extent, Scoutmaster*

## 5. Our patrols have the following leadership positions



### THE REAL

Patrol leadership structures are mostly reported to have at least one more designated position than the patrol leader.

### THE IDEAL

Many different positions are suggested in Scouting literature.

### THE OPINION

Patrol leaders should be delegating responsibility and authority so the Scouts in his patrol have plenty of both. These positions can rotate often so Scouts try different roles and skills.

### MY ANSWER

Patrol leader, assistant patrol leader, scribe and quartermaster.

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*The APL acts as patrol quartermaster*

*Of course, Patrol scribe and quartermaster are in name only.*

*We don't actual use APLs, but we do have PL, Scribe and QM*

*Missed a case: We have Patrol Leader, assistant Patrol Leader, and Quartermaster*

*And Instructor for teaching Scout skills to new Scouts.*

*PL, APL, QM*

*Grubmaster too*

*Quartermasters are selected on a per-trip basis*

*We do not have a scribe, but just patrol leader, ast. patrol, and quartermaster.*

*No APL but we have a troop scribe and troop quartermaster.*

*PL, APL, QM*

*In reality, the scribe and quartermaster haven't really done much.*

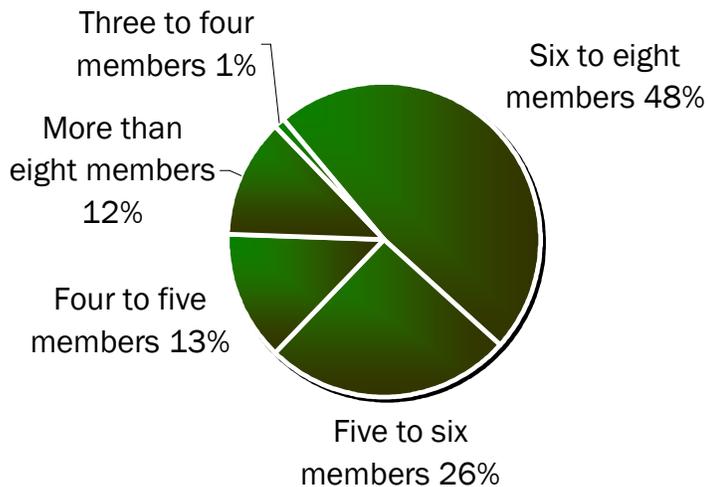
*All positions are elected by the patrols*

*Patrol Leader and Quartermaster*

*Our Troop is small now, but next election we will probably have APL's*

*Each boy has a job - historian, grubmaster etc*

## 6. Our patrols have, on average



### THE REAL

Nearly half of respondents report patrol sizes of six to eight Scouts. 12% report more than eight and 40% report six or less.

### THE IDEAL

The long-standing rule of thumb has been six to eight Scouts per patrol.

### THE OPINION

Six to eight Scouts per patrol works well. Most patrols of six or eight can manage to get at least four or five to any given event or meeting. Four or five Scouts seems to be the critical mass for effective participation as a patrol. Anything smaller

seems simply does not work as well and more than eight Scouts in a patrol seems to be the tipping point for patrol leader effectiveness.

### MY ANSWER

Six to eight.

### RESPONDENT COMMENT

*More than eight registered members. One patrol might have eight or so at a troop meeting. the other patrols numbers vary.*

*Younger patrols have six to eight; in a few years after attrition the older patrols have four to five.*

*This year we started having 10 to 12 boys assigned to a Patrol to eliminate not having enough boys in a Patrol for the outings. Seems to be working well.*

*Goal is to have 8 in each patrol, but this is often very difficult*

*This allows us to preserve actual patrols on campouts (rather than having to redistribute. If not all patrol members show up for a campout, there is enough representation to maintain patrol viability and effectiveness.*

*There are 10-12 in a patrol because typically a percentage doesn't show up for meetings or on outings. The goal is to have 8 in a patrol during meetings and outings.*

*Though, during Troop meetings there is normally 5-6. Some members are very involved in Sports and can only attend now and then and at some camp outs, but they are still interested and are coming when they can.*

## 7. During patrol leader's council meetings adults other than the Scoutmaster



### THE REAL

36% of respondents report that only the Scoutmaster attends the PLC. The remaining 64% report that other adults attend and 51% speak up and advise Scouts during these meetings on a regular basis

### THE IDEAL

Scoutmasters attend the patrol leader's council meeting as an observer. Commonly the Scoutmaster is given a moment for comment at the conclusion of the meeting.

### THE OPINION

While we want Scouts to plan and lead their own activities the line between advising, commenting on and coercing

these plans and an ongoing training process is a thin one. We all learned to lead through a mixture of training, mentoring and trial and error; we need to allow plenty of room for this with youth leaders.

As the comments below reflect there is a strong tendency towards well-intentioned adults interfering with the process. It is also apparent that there is a great deal of frustration and even anger involved on the part of adults.

If I was to concentrate my efforts on any single thing towards fostering the patrol system it would be maintaining the independence of the patrol leader's council.

### MY ANSWER

Adults other than the Scoutmaster do not attend patrol leader's council meetings.

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*Other adults rarely attend PLC*

*Our troop only has PLC meeting after troop elections. SM is Woodbadge trained. The only training scouts for leadership is the PLC after elections.*

*We haven't yet started PLCs with our troop. This is something we are working toward.*

*PLC last night at Sonny's BBQ. Big round table. Scouts only. The Asst. SM and me. Other parents brought their sons and stayed for dinner, but they sat across the room in the booths.*

*I need to find a way to exclude adults (other than SM) from these PLC meetings.*

*This is strongly recommended by the Scoutmaster, much to the frustration and anger of ASMs-- who also serve on the committee*

*Again, another change I made when taking over as SM. If other adults need to be present, I will ask them to keep quiet and will not hesitate to ask them to leave if necessary.*

*I try to control the adults talking, even my own. It is difficult to control adults - particularly the ones that don't think they need training. I generally try to not speak unless the boys are way off target, and then I only speak to get them back, or when I am on the agenda to comment.*

*An asst SM usual participates as well.*

*This is more prominent with new SPLs who have not yet developed their people, planning, or management skills to effectively "drive" the meeting. The Scoutmaster provides agenda suggestions, to which the SPL adds - and the SPL then drives that agenda at the meeting. If an adult scout speak simultaneously, the scout takes precedence.*

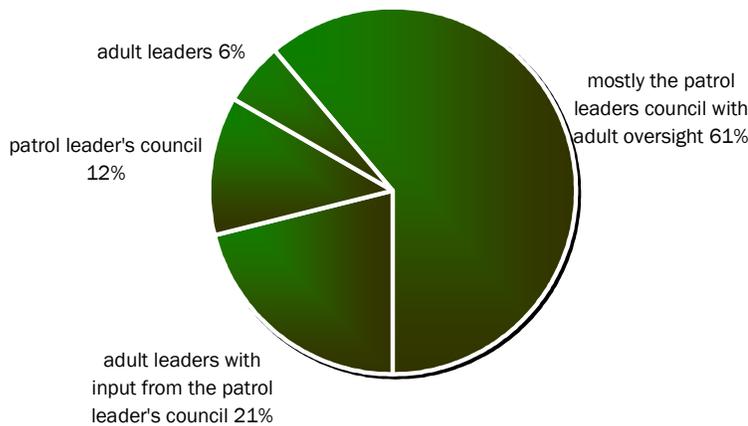
*Unfortunately, we haven't had regular PLC meetings in quite some time -- we are not very boy led*

*Our last few PLC meeting have been concurrent with troop committee meetings, which is not a good thing to do if you have a group of passive scouts, like we have.*

*We are two attending but we try to keep quiet and are just open our mouths when asked or when we have the information to share about activities. As we have just had Junior Leader Training and went through the Patrol Method and what it mean to have a Scout led Troop we are in the start forming the future the way we know it should be. SPL is in charge.*

*A few years ago it was all adult speaking with scouts taking notes. now we meet with just PLC and scoutmaster, and only offer occasional questions to try and direct attention to some planning details.*

## 8. Our meetings and outings are planned by



### THE REAL

86% of respondents report at least some direct involvement of adults in the planning process. Only 14% report that the planning is wholly accomplished by the Scouts. 24% report that planning is largely or wholly accomplished by the adults.

### THE IDEAL

Youth leadership should be planning and executing every aspect of the program. A few details may be left to adults.

### THE OPINION

Youth leadership should have all principle responsibilities for planning. They will need increasingly smaller amounts of advice as they learn.

### MY ANSWER

Patrol leader's council.

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*No PLC, no scout input. The scouts do not complain. Really do not know better.*

*We have a new SPL, so I am working with him to plan meetings. I plan to back away next month.*

*Campsite reservations and drivers are arranged by adults.*

*It's their meeting, they plan it. Mostly the campouts also, but we are still working on a couple of things.*

*Scouts plan and run the meetings. Adults plan the trips*

*PLC determines outings. Adults are involved in execution. Would like to lean more to PLC for detail management but we are not there.*

*This is a constant battle. The Scouts' chosen activities are often changed by the outdoor activities chair(s) and committee chair, without knowledge or permission of the Scouts. By the time the activity is announced, the Scouts are resigned to it.*

Somewhere between options 2 and 3. Currently training the next generation of leaders.

This is an area where we are making definite progress.

Oversight in terms of correcting steering (safety, etc)

The PLC usually plans the meetings and campout activities while the Scoutmaster(s) (SM & ASM's) handle the logistics (arrange transport, buy gas for the stoves, etc..)

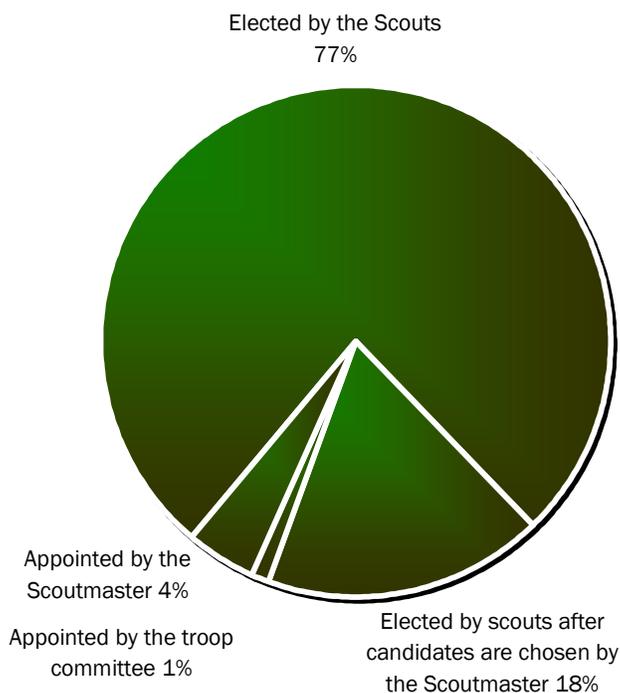
Working hard on changing that!

As mentioned, we have just started to get this in the right direction and are doing everything we can to get other adults to understand what and why we are doing it a bit different now. All the trained SM/ASM's agree about what we are doing and what we want the Troop to develop into and all the Scouts are very enthusiastic!

This has also recently changed. Planning used to be adult driven with troop meals and adults making the duty roster, now we have separate patrol menu's, boys purchasing food, cooking, and making their own duty roster. I encountered some resistance to this at first (overlap in food purchase, inefficiency and some patrols eating better than others). I kept saying "scouting is not about efficiency, it is about giving as many scouts as possible a chance at leadership" Possible B-P quote.

SM Advises

## 9. Our senior patrol leader is



### THE REAL

77% of respondents report that the Scouts elect their senior patrol leader. 23% report that there is some adult control of the process. 5% report that the SPL is appointed.

### THE IDEAL

Senior patrol leaders should be elected by the Scouts. Some Troops may establish minimum rank, age or past leadership experience levels to qualify for election.

### THE OPINION

At one time my troop had several pre-requisites of age, leadership experience and rank for senior patrol leaders. I found that this was more a way of coercing the Scouts to vote for candidates who I considered worthy rather than giving them a real choice. We did away with

these prerequisites and now any Scout can be a candidate. All they have to do is make a brief speech as to why they would like to be senior patrol leader.

Giving Scouts truly free choice in leadership elections is an expression of trust. They rise to this expectation by making good choices. I also accept that they often have a much better sense of who will do the job well than I do.

## **MY ANSWER**

Elected by the Scouts.

## **RESPONDENT COMMENTS**

*The scouts do put themselves up for elections.*

*Was appointed by my predecessor, but will be elected next time*

*Candidates give speeches at our yearly Father & Son trip, after which every youth member votes to select a new SPL.*

*Candidates that are interested meet with the SM. If he approves their "application" they can run. The SM does not select candidates.*

*Older boys usually need the leadership position for advancement.*

*This year they elected a 12-year-old who is mature beyond his years. So far he's been the most focused and committed SPL we've had in recent memory.*

*We ask the scouts wishing to be SPL to write their resume and have a conversation with the SM. These are not meant to weed out scouts; rather, it is used to prepare the scout for the position. We ask the SPL candidates to address the troop and state their qualifications and goals. Then, the troop votes.*

*We have 2 SPLs*

*Elected by the Scouts from existing PLs"*

*We have a Star rank req. for SPL.*

*Painfully, our Scouts make the selection. It is almost invariably the Scout with outside commitments, no email, lives 45 minutes away, etc., who gets elected.*

*Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. A couple years ago, the scouts elected a terrible SPL. I knew it when they did it. I let it go and when they complained to me I only said, "he was elected by the troop". The boys learned a lot.*

*Must have previously been elected as a Patrol Leader.*

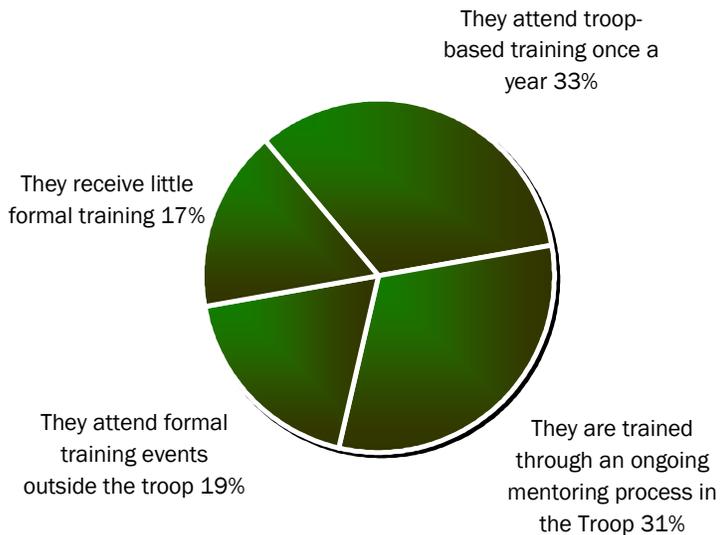
*Totally open to any one in the Troop of any rank. The Scouts have their reasons whom they elect and do a good job from this Scoutmaster's perspective.*

*The only restriction the Scoutmasters have imposed is that the SPL be at least 1st class!*

*We had a terrible, non functioning SPL when I transferred and we have a few really good candidates so we asked them to make a presentation for the Troop and then the Troop elected the ASPLs. Out from this 3 Scouts the SM and I choose the Scout we thought should be the best to lead the Troop in this first period. Next election the Troop will elect their SPL and he will then select his own ASPL.*

*Our newest SPL was elected solely on popularity, not necessarily on scout skill, prior leadership or experience. I was not looking forward to this next 6 months. However after our first PLC and our first meeting planned by this new SPL and PLC, I have been pleasantly suprised, maybe there is hope.*

**10. How are youth leaders trained? (Select all statements that apply)**



**THE REAL**

83% of respondents report youth leaders receive some form of training. Of these training schemes the most prevalent is an annual troop-based training session of some kind. 17% of youth leaders receive little or no formal training.

**THE IDEAL**

Training is essential to developing good youth leadership.

**THE OPINION**

I don't think that 'event' based training is all that effective. I also think that these courses

often substitute learning management science the development of leadership skills. Scouts respond much better to an ongoing process of mentoring than a training event. They gain real skills more readily by actual experience than by abstract instruction.

**MY ANSWER**

They are trained through an ongoing mentoring process in the Troop.

**RESPONDENT COMMENTS**

*We hold Troop training every 6 months.*

*I have my leaders attend the council youth training event held twice per year, then meet with them each week.*

*This is also something we are looking at. We've been reviewing TLT information this week.*

*Youth leaders such as myself learn by experience and on-task mentoring.*

*NYLT was utilized once. Our Scouts felt it was poorly executed by our Council. Meeting the Council NYLT adult leader and Senior Patrol Leader for the upcoming year, I quietly agreed with the Scouts in my troop. Will keep eye on future NYLT leadership hoping for better.*

*Here in the Cascade Pacific Council we have two age/ability based youth leadership camps that we send our SPL and ASPL to yearly.*

*Per your example, we are moving away from the annual Junior Leadership Training event to ongoing mentoring and coaching. We've just started a weekly review of the chapters in the Patrol Leader's Handbook.*

*This is an area where we need some work. I took over as SM 1.5 years ago, and have been concentrating in other areas of the program. I will hold an abbreviated TLT in the early winter. Luckily, we have had older scouts as SPL...they need little guidance but this is an area of the program for concentration.*

*Each event lends itself to providing SPL and PLs advice.*

*They have no formal or troop based training yet, but will change*

*We do TLT twice a year after each election. We strongly encourage the boys who are interested in leadership positions take NYLT.*

*I wish I could get more to attend NYLT*

We conduct troop-based training 2X a year (to coincide with elections) and have sent Scouts to our Council YL training, although that is not a regular occurrence as it should be.

We have TLT training, which is based on a superset of the NYLT training material. Many of our boys attend NYLT, serve as summer camp counselors and CITs, etc. - at the strong encouragement of the Scoutmaster. Scoutmasters take ownership of scout leadership success/failure and work directly with scouts to improve their leadership skills.

I plan to have our SPL to teach TLT (I, SM, have taught in past). Some have been to NYLT. We are aligned with a high adventure varsity troop that holds monthly leadership training. Three Scouts attend the training.

No required training before being elected by scouts.

TLT ever six months

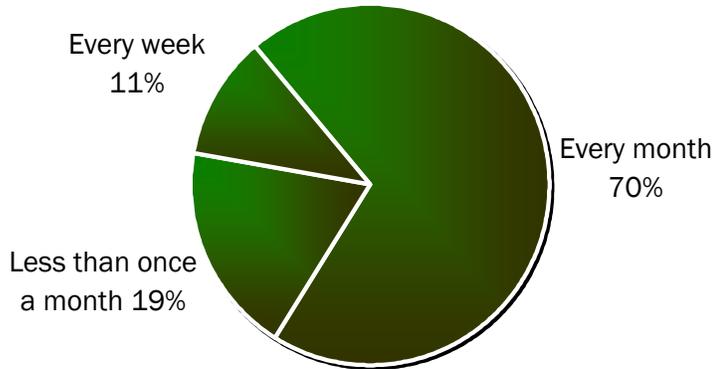
Just did our first-ever training weekend.

"We have Junior Leader Training twice a year in our troop, encourage all the Scouts to take NYLT and after about a year practicing what they learned at NYLT take the next step, go to Philmont for NAYLE.

We are coaching all on the PLC individually and after meetings on the side line (don't interrupt in their meetings, and not in front of other Scouts). After each meeting we have a PLC briefing where PLC critic themselves, then we give our input/advice."

I have found that the JLT weekend has not been very successful. My main role at PLC meetings is to have a 10-minute or so JLT training at the beginning of every PLC. then I hand the meeting over to the SPL.

## 11. Our patrol leader's council meets



### THE REAL

89% of respondents report that the patrol leader's council meets once a month or less. 11% report weekly meetings.

### THE IDEAL

The patrol leader's council is the source of planning, direction and leadership in a Scout troop. Formal meetings for planning are important to their success.

### THE OPINION

As the core source of

leadership and direction the patrol leader's council should be meeting once a week. These meetings do not need to be formal or lengthy. Our patrol leader's council meets prior to and just after every troop meeting and several times during a camping trip. They share plans, information and direction at these meetings. I look in as frequently or infrequently as the situation warrants. These regular meetings are prime opportunities for mentoring the patrol leader's council as a group.

Meeting often also establishes the authority and responsibility of the senior patrol leader. It also keeps the task at hand in front of youth leaders much more effectively; they will act on what is decided at these meetings in moments rather than hours days or weeks.

More formal planning meetings are held once a month.

### MY ANSWER

Every week.

## **RESPONDENT COMMENTS**

*I am not sure how to do this with 6 scouts. I plan to have the SPL appoint an assistant, and have them act as a council.*

*They usually plan two months at a time.*

*A brief PLC is held before and after every meeting, to prepare Patrol Leaders and then to recap the meeting's events and discuss the schedule for the immediate future*

*Nearly never*

*And briefly after each meeting*

*They have a formal sit-down planning session once a month and meet briefly after each troop meeting.*

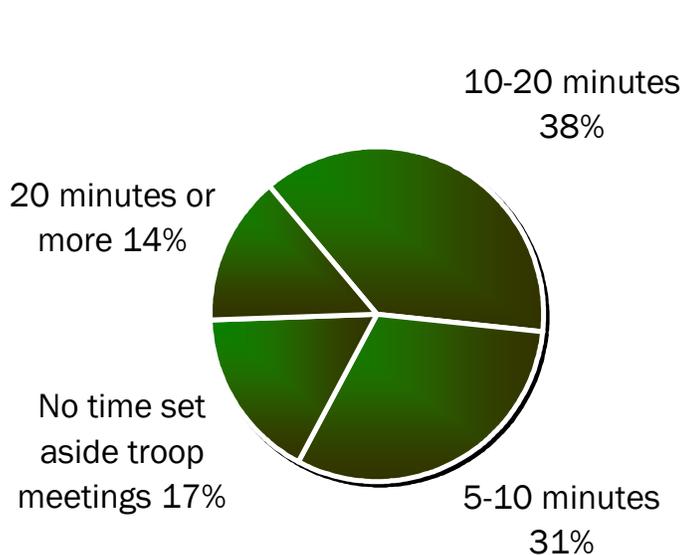
*This is where we get off at a patrol system. Need to do this more often. Like after every meeting*

*Less than once a month – or never if that was an option*

*Monthly planning meeting and weekly 1/2 hour meeting before each troop meeting.*

*From September. The previous SPL never got his act together to have PLC meetings, even though he was coached, mentored, told to. The last month before the election we had to take over to make sure there were any programme at all for the Troop meetings. The new PLC have a 3 month programme detail planned and are planning to always have 3 months well planned and the rest of the year monthly themes and all the camp outs and other Scout events planned.*

## **12. Patrol time scheduled at our troop meetings lasts**



### **THE REAL**

46% of respondents report that patrols have 10 minutes of meeting time or less allotted to them at troop meetings. 17% report patrols are given no time in the troop meeting and 14% report patrols are given 20 minutes or more.

### **THE IDEAL**

Patrols should have time to meet and plan within the context of a troop meeting.

### **THE OPINION**

Patrols need time for planning and preparation for a camping trip, inter-patrol competition or other activity. Ideally they will learn something within the

troop meeting and be given time to practice it in the patrol meeting time.

### **MY ANSWER**

Patrol leader's council.

## **RESPONDENT COMMENTS**

*We just changed SPLs, I have asked the new SPL to schedule patrol time in the meetings. Will have to see how it works. Letting it happen Ad Hoc up to now has not worked.*

*This is something we are starting to implement. The SPL is on board with it, but the first couple meetings have not lent themselves to this change. We will start it soon.*

One meeting per month is a dedicated patrol meeting.

Patrols are given 34 minutes per meeting, which allows them to take care of certain patrol-oriented business items, such as selecting grubmasters and quartermasters, and collecting dues and permission slips.

Our troop has a long history of not using the patrol method and adult only leadership. It is a long slow process to get that changed.

Patrol-specific activities generally happen every other troop meeting, to accommodate specific, troop-level program and planning items.

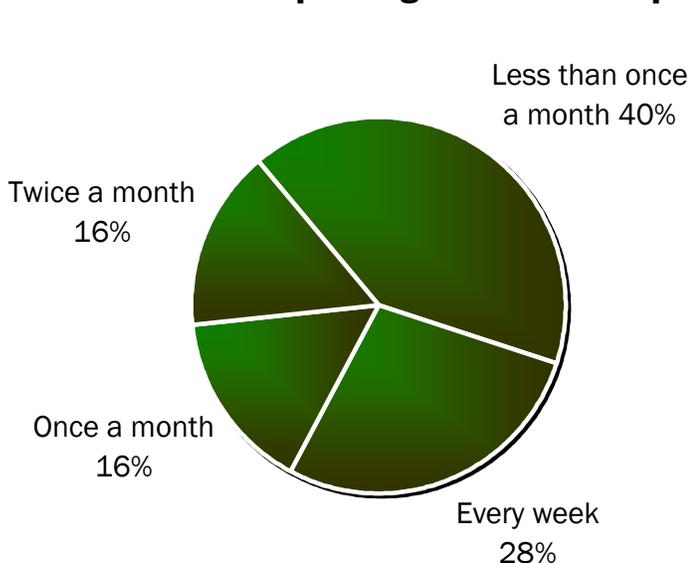
We are struggling to implement this. When the parents ran the troop, there were no patrol meetings so the Scouts have no institutional knowledge of the process.

Actually a separate meeting

We are working hard now to get the Patrols to keep their main Patrol meetings/activities outside the Troop meeting and have one ASM assigned to each Patrol to be the coach/mentor.

It is sometimes not very productive time; this is an area where I feel that the troop needs to improve

### 13. Inter-patrol games and competitions are held



#### THE REAL

40% report that they have patrol competitions less than once a month.

#### THE IDEAL

Competitions build patrol spirit, sharpen leadership skills and are just plain fun.

#### THE OPINION

Patrol competitions should be a regular part of the troop program

#### MY ANSWER

Once a month.

#### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

We try to play a game every meeting. Involves the whole troop. Is not generally patrol vs patrol. Our patrols tend to be organized around when they joined (with their friends). So Patrol vs Patrol would be older scouts vs younger vs even younger.

Only games of steal the bacon, no other competitions.

Never

I have tried and tried to get the PLC to do inter-patrol games at every meeting.

Inter-patrol games and competitions occur mostly on trips and are usually not inter-patrol/per se/; there are usually two teams and teams are not segregated by patrols. Official inter-patrol competition occurs at the Father & Son weekend and at the Scoutmaster's Challenge meeting.

2-3 times per month.

We always have a game, but they are rarely inter-patrol competitions. The PLC recently decided that the "game patrol" for each meeting should try to find games where the three patrols can compete against each other. So far though, the game patrol has not selected a game by the meeting time, and so they play British Bulldogs.

Again, another area for concentration.

We have 17 year-olds that still do crab races. Great fun.

Goal is weekly. One of the ASPL's jobs is to plan the weekly games. Some times that works and other times it doesn't.

I have to hedge my answer here - our Scouts play an organized game every week. I have encouraged them to play games that are patrol competitions, but they tend to revert to more "individual" games like "war ball," "british bull dog," etc..

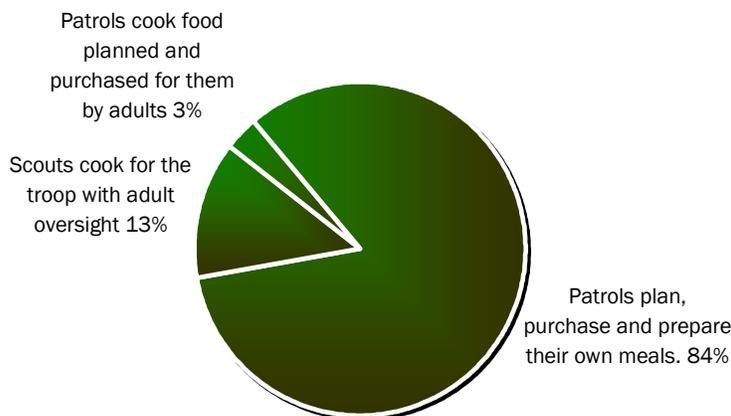
An area of improvement...

We meet as a troop twice a month plus outings

We have an activity every Troop meeting.

Sometimes they are troop wide games, other times patrol competitions.

## 14. On our camping trips



### THE REAL

84% of respondents report that patrols plan, purchase, and prepare their own meals.

### THE IDEAL

Patrols need to have ongoing responsibilities that give them the opportunity to exercise both Scout skills and the group dynamics of accomplishing challenging work.

### THE OPINION

This is a very bright spot in the survey – something that nearly everyone gets right.

### MY ANSWER

Patrols plan, purchase and prepare their own meals.

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*On regular camping trips adults eat separate from scouts; at summer camp adults are invited to eat with patrols*

*Adults buy prep and cook separately. Usually something more challenging hoping to get the boys interested in what we made. (can we cook that next time?)*

*Patrol plans are review by SM or ASM.*

*Adults cook separately.*

*Before each trip, a patrol selects a grubmaster who plans to attend. The grubmaster plans the meals for the trip, purchases the food, and prepares it on the trip; except for the Father & Son weekend when adults prepare the food for three meals.*

*With smaller troop we sometimes combine into one group to get economy of scale for eating, but youth still do plan menus and cook meals. Adults help with cooking and cleanup when we are eating with the youth.*

*It used to be that scouts would do it all, however certain parent personalities have entered and makes the process....hell. We used to hold cook-offs in between the patrols and the adult leaders on the trip would be the judges. New parents entered decided "not to participate" and cooked their guy's food for them. The current SM avoided conflict and now over time has morphed into the same adults cooking for all the boys all the time.*

*Meal planning and purchase falls to the adults.*

*Parents often ruin this activity by breaking out unplanned "rescue food" or Mountain House for their son. This causes a cascade of anarchy and envy causing the other scout to deviate from their meal plan.*

*Planning precedence is given to the boys working on trail to first class.*

*Since we don't combine patrols any longer, if we have a few scouts attending, we cook as a unit. One patrol will provide a cook to plan the menu and obtain the food. This patrol will also serve as the troop cook.*

*Patrols cook for themselves. Adults cook for themselves. The boys often ask, "why are you eating that good food (when we are eating hotdogs)". Answer, "this is what we planned, that is what you planned".*

*Patrols plan and prepare their own meals. I am still convinced that parents do the shopping!*

*Occasionally, we make exceptions and have adults participate in food preparation/cleanup - e.g. when there is more scout value in the venue than in operations (e.g. the recent Centennial Rendezvous, put on by Great Lakes Council).*

*The adults eat separately and provide little or no guidance for the scouts*

*Some helicopter parents occasionally interfere with the cooking.*

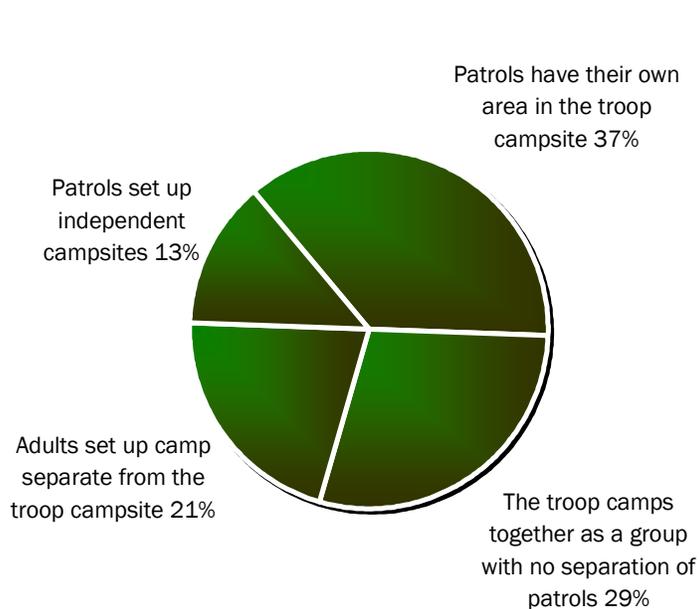
*This is the area where we have been most successful with boy-lead format.*

*Adults cook for themselves*

*Sometimes – sometimes adults cook (and I want to stop the practice) and most of the time the adults do bulk purchasing of food.*

*A year ago we were adults plan and cook, we went through a transformation just like your choices above until now when we are generally patrol purchase, plan, prepare. We did just have a fall camporee with 9 boys attending and one ASM worked with his son to plan purchase food and there was a troop duty roster, no patrols. I didn't like this, and hope we don't have to do it again. Scouts have given me positive feedback on patrol method cooking.*

## 15. When we are camping



### THE REAL

13% of respondents report that patrols set up camp independently. 87% report that they do not (although 40% report that they have an area within the troop campsite). 23% report that patrols are not separated.

### THE IDEAL

Patrols need to have the independence to exercise their skills without constant adult oversight.

### THE OPINION

The proximity of adults greatly affects the way a patrol functions. Ideally the majority of the time they spend camping they will be exclusively under their own leadership.

### MY ANSWER

Patrols set up independent campsites..

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*We divide out the site by patrols and adults, but have a common area in the center*

*Don't tend to have enough participation to split up by patrols. Adults camp a short distance away.*

*Each patrol sets up its own campsite. Adults are considered a separate patrol and set up a campsite a distance away from the boys' patrol campsites.*

*I want to select the last two answers?*

*Patrols set up camp in a selected area, where they pitch tents and set up a dining fly and kitchen.*

*We leave our JASM with the boy's camping group.*

*Adults and youth in one general clumped area.*

*We are just starting to try separating the patrols.*

*Our goal is to have patrol campsites when practical. We have a way to go to get there...*

*Need more options. Adults camp off to the end of the patrol camps. Space available really dictates the camp. If we go to a National Forest campsite, each patrol gets their own campsite, adults in yet another.*

*Would like to get to the point that adults have some separation from the youth and have patrols camp together. Again, it is a slow process to change the youth and adults. It works better at summer camp than it does any other time of the year.*

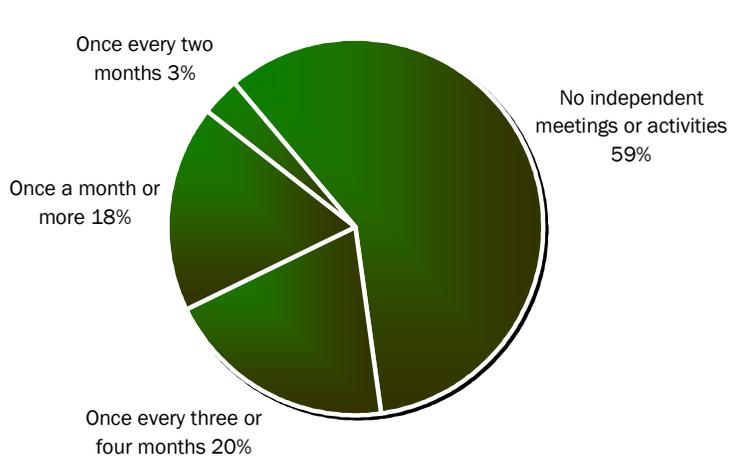
*Sometimes, based on location, they set up their own area in the Troop campsite. Adults are always separate.*

*No real separation of patrols in troop campsite.*

We separate Adult Leaders/Parents (are still coming for camping, a left over from how it has been before) and the Patrols are camping for them selves but within visible distance.

This one is still a work in progress; we have some who like to share a tent with someone in a different patrol. I am trying to encourage separate camping areas, but little success there so far. We had one recent campout were there were 3 adults and we camped a little to the side of the troop, almost out of site. The boys loved that and there were no overnight problems, so that looks hopeful

## 16. On average our patrols have independent meetings/activities



### THE REAL

59% of respondents report that patrols never meet independently. 41% report that they do but only 18% do so at least once a month.

### THE IDEAL

Patrols should have independent meetings and events (camping trips, hikes, etc.)

### THE OPINION

Time and scheduling is usually cited as the reason that patrols do not meet independently. Altering the troop meeting

schedule allows patrols to meet on their own and have their own independent activities.

### MY ANSWER

Once a month or more.

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*I'd like this to change.*

*Something I want to work with the PLC to encourage.*

*Once a week*

*Very rarely, if ever.*

*Patrol Leaders are asked to plan a Patrol Meeting for their patrols about once a month.*

*One week a month is patrol meeting instead of troop meeting.*

*Doubt some boys even know what patrol they are in without looking at their shoulder patch.*

*Once a year*

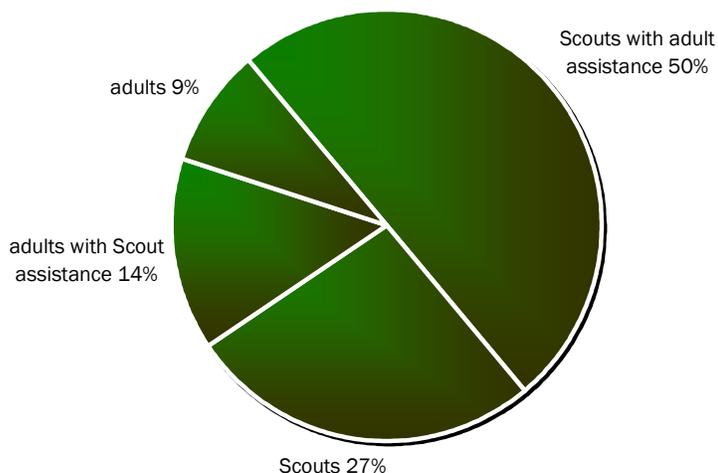
*We emphasize it heavily, but very hard to get Scouts to imagine doing it in order to do it. I blame parents in part, who schedule everything. It's hard to get the Scouts to see their own ability to schedule outside of "regular" scouting events.*

*Would like to see patrol meetings outside of troop meetings but Scouts are over scheduled with sports, music, and other after school activities.*

*Twice per moth*

*We are now working focused on the National Honor Patrol Award which is a good guideline to follow.*

## 17. Our skill instruction is mostly planned and carried out by



### THE REAL

77% of respondents report that Scouts have a role in instruction. 27% report that Scouts do all of the instruction. 23% report that adults have the key responsibility for instructing.

### THE IDEAL

Scouts should be instructing Scouts at every opportunity.

### THE OPINION

This is another example of giving Scouts the opportunity to develop and exercise skills. The adult role is mentoring

their skills, not taking the key role for making this happen.

### MY ANSWER

Scouts.

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*Depends on the instruction. Sometimes we bring in an outside "expert" on fire starting with a bow, or primitive shelters from what nature provides us. Usually the boys do the teaching. Sometimes an in troop adult may give a demonstration (ultra light hiking equipment).*

*Depends. A little bit. All Tenderfoot through First Class instruction is carried out by the Scouts. I would include answer 3 for occasional times when we need to teach a new skill (climbing, rowing, etc) that we haven't done in the past, or when the older Scouts request some Merit Badge instruction in the field (Pioneering, Lifesaving, Wilderness Survival, etc).*

*Experienced scouts are often called upon to instruct younger scouts. Occasionally adults with special expertise on a subject are called in to help instruct.*

*We are trying to shift to 100% boy skills lead. The aforementioned parent group makes it rather difficult.*

*Older scouts genuinely enjoy teaching skills to younger scouts or Webelos.*

*We also could check Adults with Scout Assistance, depending on the course of instruction.*

*However, quality is inconsistent and often poor. We are working to improve this.*

*Occasionally adult assistance*

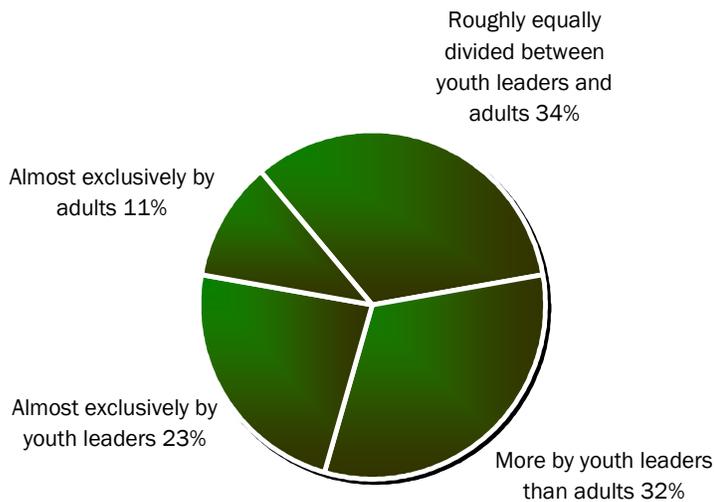
*Adults assist as requested by the scouts.*

*SPL planned a skills instruction campout for the spring. Scouts will teach other Scouts; Adults will help if requested.*

*We have Instructor as a leader position in addition to one Troop Guide. Hope this number will grow...*

*This is a change over the last 6 months. Now we are scout prepared and presented, it needs work and looks a little chaotic at times, but we have good attendance at meetings (greater than 75%) and the boys seem to be listening most of the time. I established scoutmaster role as coach and mentor to the SPL and any scout who may need this help.*

## 18. In our troop directions to scouts are given



### THE REAL

55% of respondents report that youth leadership has the key responsibility for directing Scouts. 23% report that youth leaders are almost exclusively directing. 11% report that direction is almost exclusively given by adults.

### THE IDEAL

Scouts should be directing Scouts at every opportunity.

### THE OPINION

An adult directly speaking to a Scout in order to tell them what to do should be a relatively rare occurrence.

### MY ANSWER

Almost exclusively by youth leaders.

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*If needed I whisper in the ear of the SPL. Some of the other adults like to yell at the boys. Trying to get that cut out. At a good meeting I wander around and talk with adults about whatever.*

*New scouts have not learned about the chain of command within their youth membership*

*This balance is being slowly shifted toward the Scouts, but only with much resistance from the adults.*

*As the SM, I work hard to have the scouts lead themselves. This takes time to develop. Very hard...*

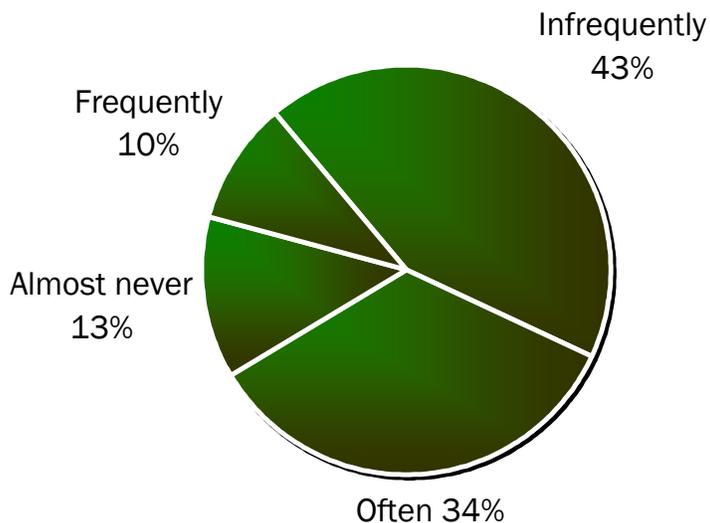
*We are also trying to get all our adults to "buy in" to the same system (i.e. no adult should ever tell a Scout what to do), but some folks are hard to convince!*

*Of course, our Scouts really have no idea what is happening until the adults tell them*

*I only talk to the SPL.*

*If the SPL has a challenge with a Scout or a situation and he cannot get the desirable result, he ask a Scout Leader to assist and we talk to the Scout/s involved and after the meeting we discuss it with the SPL.*

## 19. Adults are directly involved in the action at troop meetings, patrol meetings and outings



### THE REAL

44% of respondents report that adults are often or frequently involved in the action. 56% report that this involvement is less frequent. 13% report that this is very rare.

### THE IDEAL

Adult involvement is an indication of youth leader responsibility.

### THE OPINION

Adults should be mindful of how their presence affects the dynamic of leadership. Scouts will default to adults for leadership and direction if they are present.

### MY ANSWER

Almost never.

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*Everyone seems to have a helpful comment or point of view. Been working at keeping them brief, as if you suggest something, the boys tend to just do that rather than think for themselves.*

*SPL is supposed to run the troop meeting.*

*This drives some of the parents crazy. We are in the process of retraining those parents. The Troop meeting is meant to be run and executed by the Scouts. It will very rarely go off without some hitch.*

*Only when their help is requested by the Scouts.*

*PLC runs meeting from an agenda created by the scoutmaster with input from the PLC.*

*As requested by the PLC and / or SPL*

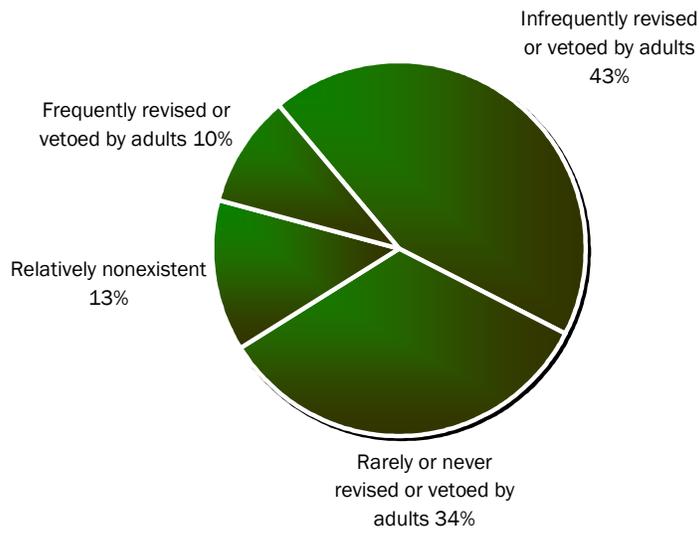
*Not a good question--adults are frequently used for SM meetings or advice (merit badge cards, sign off requirements, etc.).*

*When requested by the scout leaders.*

*SM or an ASM monitors the meeting.*

*Hoping to get this to Almost Never when we have got the changes worked in well.*

## 20. Plans made out by youth leaders are



### THE REAL

66% of respondents report that Scout's plans are revised or vetoed by adults. 10% report that this is a frequent occurrence. 13% report that Scouts do little or no planning.

### THE IDEAL

Scout planning should be respected within the bounds of safety and propriety.

### THE OPINION

Encouraging Scouts to plan, seeing that their plans are thorough and getting them into action is an ongoing challenge for most of us. We should respond to any indication of

initiative and build on it. Altering or vetoing their plans should be a rare occurrence.

### MY ANSWER

Rarely or never revised or vetoed by adults.

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*Trying to get them to make written plans. The impromptu stuff had been working, but I think we could have more fun if we did harder more challenging things that perhaps required some preparation. We usually have the Troop trailer with us. It has enough supplies to make up lack of planning. Somewhat of a crutch.*

*Rarely, but occasionally. No hazing. No unsafe stuff. Sometimes they need instruction in the definition of these items.*

*As Scoutmaster I am included in PLC meeting. Our youth leaders involve me in process, so they are guided to decisions I will support. Most of my guidance revolves around safety, expense and practicality. I have had to sell other leaders on traveling a bit further and a bit more high adventure than they historically preferred. I assist more than I want with meeting planning to keep the process moving.*

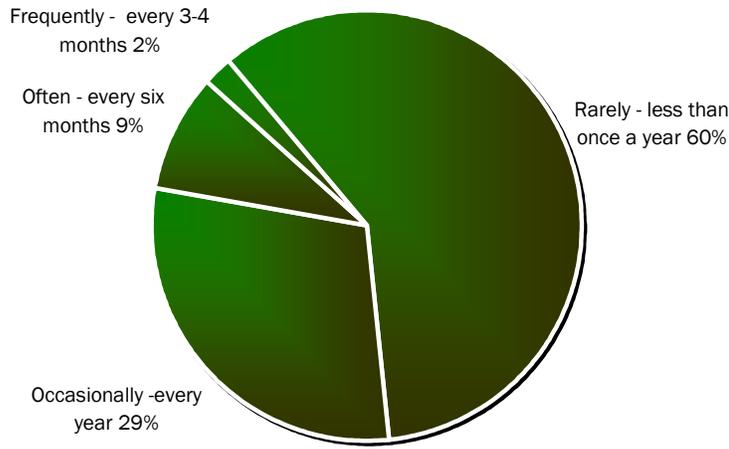
*Only if safety concern or lack of participation forces us to change activities.*

*However, then revised or vetoed is discussed and then usually the boy leadership recognizes what would be better and makes the change*

*However, I ask lots of questions to help them think about what they are doing and why.*

*Plans are reviewed by the SM and if needed, the parent committee is brought in when the yearly plan is made.*

## 20. Plans made out by youth leaders are



### THE REAL

89% of respondents report that patrols are reshuffled each year or less. 11% report that this happens at least every six months.

### THE IDEAL

Patrols should have a definite identity, membership based on Scout choice and should have some continuity over time.

### THE OPINION

Patrols with long, unshuffled continuity are probably an asset to applying the patrol system. That being said dealing with attrition to keep a patrol at

functional levels and a Scouts preference for teaming up with his fellow Scouts is important to a successful patrol.

### MY ANSWER

Occasionally, every year..

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*We have talked about reorganizing the patrols, but generally the SPL likes them the way they are. We generally have a new patrol every year, and the older boys from a span of years get lumped together into one patrol*

*When older scouts leave, when new scouts join the troop.*

*Usually when a new SPL is elected.*

*Never. (3 comments)*

*Only when new scouts join or bridge over.*

*SPL and Leadership corps are selected every 6mo*

*Never, our patrols are by age. Every year a new patrol or two are formed with the new scouts*

*We usually reform patrols immediately following Camporee.*

*We are facing this right now. We have some scouts who wish to move patrols. As SM, I could ask them to move based on my wishes, but I'm going to ask the PLC to decide how they want this movement to be handled.*

*Not been an issue in 3 years.*

*It only happens if a patrol gets too small to function. We have 2 patrols that have been together for 4 years. Each have only lost 1 or 2 members.*

*Depends on need. The Troop used to assign patrols, etc., this required remaking patrols on a fairly frequent basis. I got rid of that and let Scouts form their own patrols. I haven't had to reform patrols in almost 2 years. Members have held steady.*

*This causes some additional stress and readjustment, but gives more scouts the opportunity to lead.*

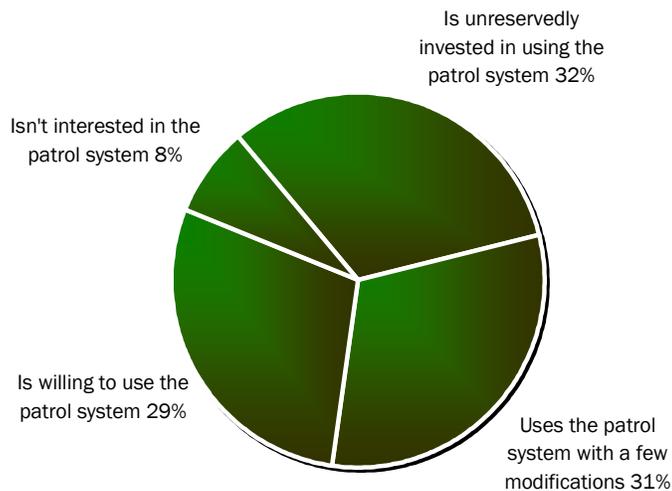
*Unfortunately, Scouts are stuck with the patrol they are in when they join.*

Hopefully this will settle down. We tried a New Scout Patrol and it didn't work.

Scouts stay in their patrols unless there is a need to move them.

Trying to avoid changing Patrol members

## 22. Our adult leadership



### THE REAL

32% of respondents use the patrol system without any modifications. 31% modify the patrol system. 29% aspire to use the patrol system and 8% are uninterested.

### THE IDEAL

The patrol system should be the central focus of and Scouting program.

### THE OPINION

I feel strongly that the patrol system is not actually the patrol system if it is subject to modification. To be truly effective it must be applied directly and fully, without

caveats, without reservation and without modification. I respect the many reasons for modifying the program but I think they generally detract from the experience for our Scouts.

### MY ANSWER

Is unreservedly invested in using the patrol system.

### RESPONDENT COMMENTS

*The scoutmaster wants to use the Patrol System.*

*Some adults play lip service to the patrol system, but don't want to waste time for a patrol meeting inside the troop meeting."*

*We are rebuilding our patrols*

*It is modified to account for our troops size.*

*A group of us would but majority aren't really the team playing types.*

*Our parents and ASMs have not attended Leader Specific Training and do not really understand the patrol system*

*The patrol method fell out of practice in recent years. Current youth and adult leaders have limited experience or examples to follow.*

*With a few exceptions. We have had leaders who have left the unit after 6 months of the patrol method. Typically, these are Webelos leaders or parents who can't make the transition and want to continue to baby the youth.*

*Is struggling to make the Patrol system work. In the UK we lose our Scouts to Explorers at 14yrs - just when they are maturing into useful leaders. We have a Young Leadership programme for Explorer Scouts but we aren't supposed to use these guys as PLs*

*A lot of young Scouts, but we encourage the patrol system a lot and tout it as our ideal. It is a slow uphill learning curve.*

*Some adults are whiling, mostly the ones who are fully trained. Other adults are more interesting in looking and sounding important in front of the troop.*

*I have to keep the adults at bay! They too are learning what Boy Led means :-)*

*By that I mean the SM and ASMs. The Committee members and other parents are not that interested/willing to use.*

*Willing to use the system, but only slightly. Surprisingly, this has changed little since the SM and Committee Chair went through Woodbadge*

*No all parents are on board.*

*I'd like to say invested, but we are not there yet.*

*I'm working to change that.*

*We just need to get the full information about it out to all the parents so they fully can understand what we are doing and why. Working on the Information!*

*Hard to say, they do recognize that each scoutmaster (been switching scoutmasters every 2 or 3 yrs) has a different vision for the troop and they generally go along with it. I have been suffering some resistance to this, especially at first, but now the adults seem to approve of the way the troop is heading. Still grumbling from some boys and adults not knowing the meeting format or what is expected of them. I try to say it is like an ocean liner changing direction, it's going to take some time.*

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Clearly I could have designed some of this survey differently and ask some more well-defined questions. Comments certainly offered helped greatly to define the results.

As I suspected there seems to be a great deal of interest in the patrol system and an equal number of challenges in its application. These challenges are principally due to the recalcitrance to use the patrol system on the part of adults. Part of this is due to a lack of understanding, part to an aversion to uncertainty and part due to a misapprehension of how crucial patrols are to the goals of Scouting.

I hope to have offered some insight into the challenges and some direction for a way forward.

## **THE AUTHOR**

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